

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-06 SSM-03 IO-13 EUR-12 /084 W
-----271957Z 088457 /61

P 271643Z MAY 77
FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6389
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

C O N F I D E N T I A L TEL AVIV 3805

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, IS
SUBJECT: DMC, LIBERAL PARTY AND THE PROBLEM OF FORMING A COALITION
WITH LIKUD

REF: TEL AVIV 3701

1. DIR. HERZL FISHMAN, DIRECTOR, INTERNATIONAL DEPARTMENT
OF THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, MEMBER OF THE DMC POLICY
COMMITTEE AND ADVISOR ON SOCIAL AND EDUCATION MATTERS
TO YADIN, TOLD EMBOFF ON MAY 27 THAT DMC REACTION TO
DAYAN'S DESIGNATION AS FOREIGN MINISTER HAD BEEN UN-
ANIMOUSLY HOSTILE AND HE SAW LITTLE POSSIBILITY THAT IT
COULD JOIN A COALITION WITH THE LIKUD UNLESS THAT NOMINA-
TION WERE WITHDRAWN (SEPTEL). A 13 MEMBER POLICY DIRECTORATE
CONSISTING OF SIX KNESSET MEMBERS, SIX OTHER PARTY OFFICIALS
AND CHAIRED BY YADIN IS TO BE ELECTED THE FIRST WEEK OF
JUNE. THIS COMMITTEE WILL THEN MAKE THE FINAL DECISION
ON WHETHER TO JOIN THE LIKUD. IF THE
DAYAN NOMINATION IS WITHDRAWN, HE THOUGHT THAT A
MAJORITY WOULD FAVOR JOINING THE COALITION--THIS
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DESPITE THE FACT THAT THERE IS A GENERAL FEELING IN
THE DMC THAT ITS POSITION IN A BEGIN GOVERNMENT WOULD
NOT BE STRONG AND THAT THE DMC WOULD BE ISOLATED ON
MOST MAJOR POLICY ISSUES. FISHMAN THEN ADDED THAT THE
ONE THING WHICH COULD PERSUADE THE DMC TO OVERCOME
ITS PRESENT RESERVATIONS TO JOINING A LIKUD COALITION
WOULD BE THE SPATE OF NEW POLICY PRONOUNCEMENTS EMA-

NATING FROM WASHINGTON REGARDING A MIDDLE EAST SETTLEMENT WHICH ARE SEEN TO BE TOO SPECIFICALLY FAVORABLE TO THE ARABS. FISHMAN CITED AS EXAMPLES PARTICULARLY BOTHERSOME TO HIM REFERENCES TO THE 1947 U.N. RESOLUTION AND COMPENSATION TO THE PALESTINIANS WHICH, HE CLAIMED, SHOCKED ALL ISRAELIS REGARDLESS OF PARTY AFFILIATION. EMBOFF RESPONDED WITH ARGUMENTS SET OUT IN STATE 122504.

2. HAROLD ROSEN, ACTING DIRECTOR GENERAL OF THE JEWISH AGENCY, TOLD EMBOFF THAT AT THE MEETING BETWEEN AGENCY OFFICIALS AND DULZIN ON MAY 25 (REFTEL), POLLSTER HANOCH SMITH HAD POINTED OUT THAT UP TO THE LAST MOMENT HIS AND OTHER POLLS HAD INDICATED THAT MORE VOTERS WOULD PREFER PERES AS PRIME MINISTER THAN BEGIN, THUS THE OUTCOME OF THE ELECTION COULD NOT BE CONSIDERED AS A PERSONAL MANDATE FOR BEGIN. SMITH ALSO HAD REITERATED THAT FOREIGN POLICY CONSIDERATIONS HAD PLAYED A SUBORDINATE ROLE IN THE VOTING FOR THE LIKUD. THE LIBERAL PARTY WAS SOLIDLY SUPPORTING DULZIN AS CANDIDATE FOR FOREIGN MINISTER, EVEN THOUGH THERE HAD BEEN SOME EARLIER RESERVATIONS AS TO HOW STRONG AND ASSERTIVE A LEADER HE WOULD BE. THUS, WITH THE ENDORSEMENT OF HIS PARTY AND AFTER CONSULTATION WITH DMC LEADERS, DULZIN HAD ANNOUNCED OVER TELEVISION ON MAY 25 HIS CANDIDACY AS FOREIGN MINISTER, ONLY TO BE SHOT DOWN LATER THAT SAME NIGHT BY BEGIN'S ANNOUNCEMENT THAT HE HAD CHOSEN DAYAN WITHOUT PRIOR CONSULTATION WITH THE LIBERALS. THE LIBERALS
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PARTY IS REACTING VERY SHARPLY BOTH PUBLICLY AND PRIVATELY AND IS DEMANDING THAT BEGIN WITHDRAW HIS OFFER TO DAYAN (SEPTTEL). HOWEVER, ROSEN ADMITTED THAT AT THIS STAGE IT WAS NOT TOO LIKELY THAT THE LIBERAL PARTY WITH ITS 17 KNESSET SEATS WOULD WITHDRAW FROM THE LIKUD OVER THIS ISSUE.

3. ROSEN FURTHER COMMENTED THAT BECAUSE OF THE STRAINS WITHIN THE LIKUD, IT WAS NOT BEYOND THE REALM OF POSSIBILITY THAT A SUBSTANTIALLY NEW REALIGNMENT OF POLITICAL FORCES MIGHT OCCUR IN ISRAEL EVEN WITHIN THE NEXT YEAR. HE FORESAW SUBSTANTIAL POLICY DIFFERENCES ARISING WITHIN THE LIKUD AND BETWEEN THE LIKUD AND THE RELIGIOUS PARTIES NOT ONLY ON FOREIGN POLICY, BUT ALSO ON RELIGIOUS ISSUES AND SOCIAL-ECONOMIC POLICY. THIS COULD DRAW THE LIBERAL PARTY AND DMC CLOSER TOGETHER. HE ALSO CITED AS A POSSIBLE ALLY OF THIS LIBERAL-CENTER GROUP THE YOUNG GUARD (SHILUV) OF THE LABOR PARTY. THIS GROUP IS FEELING INCREASING

DISSATISFACTION WITHIN THE LABOR PARTY, A FEELING APPARENTLY REINFORCED BY THE DEFEAT OF ITS RECENT EFFORT TO OUST MESHEL FROM HIS CANDIDACY FOR SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE HISTADRUT (SEPTTEL). YEHIEL LEKET, A FORMER LEADER OF THE YOUNG GUARD, HAD ALREADY CONTACTED DMC AND SUGGESTED THAT THE YOUNG GUARD MAY BE WILLING TO JOIN A NEW LEFT-CENTER OPPOSITION MOVEMENT UNDER YADIN'S LEADERSHIP, IF YADIN REFRAINED FROM JOINING THE BEGIN GOVERNMENT. ROSEN SAID THAT HE WOULD SOON MEET WITH YOUNG GUARD, DMC, AND LIBERAL PARTY LEADERS TO FIND OUT TO WHAT EXTENT THERE MIGHT BE COMMON INTERESTS IN THE EVENTUAL FORMATION OF SUCH A POLITICAL BLOC, ESPECIALLY IN THE WAKE OF THE ANGRY REACTION TO THE DAYAN APPOINTMENT.

4. NEXT, ROSEN TURNED TO THE PROBLEMS WITH THE AMERICAN AND EUROPEAN JEWISH COMMUNITIES AND SAID THAT
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TWO INTERNATIONAL MEETINGS WERE SCHEDULED IN JERUSALEM NEXT MONTH--THE WORLD ZIONIST ORGANIZATION ACTION COMMITTEE MEETING, JUNE 22-24, AND THE JEWISH AGENCY ASSEMBLY, JUNE 26-30. HE EXPECTED THAT AT BOTH THESE MEETINGS THE AMERICAN AND EUROPEAN JEWISH LEADERSHIP WOULD FULLY EXPRESS ITS ANXIETY OVER BEGIN'S FOREIGN POLICY STATEMENTS AND THE POSSIBLE CONSEQUENCES WHICH HIS HARD LINE MIGHT HAVE ON RELATIONS BETWEEN ISRAEL AND THE JEWISH COMMUNITIES IN THE DIASPORA.

5. COMMENT: ROSEN, ALTHOUGH ESSENTIALLY APOLITICAL, IS A DOVE AND VERY UPSET OVER THE BEGIN VICTORY. HE FORESEES THAT ANY BEGIN-LED COALITION WOULD BE HIGHLY UNSTABLE AND MIGHT BE REPLACED WITHIN LESS THAN A YEAR EVEN WITHOUT NEW KNESSET ELECTIONS. SINCE HE IS CONSTANTLY EXPOSED TO EXPRESSIONS OF CONCERN AND ANXIETY FROM THE AMERICAN AND EUROPEAN JEWISH COMMUNITIES, HIS VIEWS OF THE POTENTIAL WEAKNESS OF A BEGIN-LED COALITION GOVERNMENT MAY BE RATHER BIASED. HOWEVER, AS BOTH HE AND DR. FISHMAN HAVE INDICATED, BEGIN'S UNILATERAL DESIGNATION OF DAYAN AS HIS CANDIDATE FOR FOREIGN MINISTER HAVE BROUGHT TO THE FORE RATHER EARLY ALL THE VARIOUS DIFFERENCES AND CONCERNS WHICH BESET VARIOUS GROUPS AND PARTIES MOST LIKELY TO CONSTITUTE BEGIN'S POTENTIAL COALITION PARTNERS.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: REPORTS, POLITICAL PARTIES, POLITICAL SITUATION, PARTY SCHISMS, PERSONNEL RESIGNATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 27-May-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977TELAV03805
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770190-0647
Format: TEL
From: TEL AVIV
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t1977057/aaaaagax.tel
Line Count: 166
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 52843096-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 77 TEL AVIV 3701
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 03-Feb-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2565239
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: DMC, LIBERAL PARTY AND THE PROBLEM OF FORMING A COALITION WITH LIKUD
TAGS: PINT, IS
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/52843096-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009